

through the work of my colleague Mr. PLATTS from Pennsylvania, we have put together a great bill. This is a bill that can help people to the future. This is a bill that incorporates our elderly and our young. So, it's something that I think we should all be proud of. And certainly I'm hoping that we're not going to have any controversies further down the line.

And may I just say one thing: A number of speakers have gotten up and talked about the FISA bill. Let me say this to the American people: With the continuation that we have, this country is being protected. And we are trying to work it out with our colleagues from the other side and the administration. But let me make one thing very clear, the country is being protected. The intelligence committees can do what they need to do, and our intelligence community is getting information at that.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PLATTS. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I want to again just thank my subcommittee chairman, Chairwoman MCCARTHY, for her leadership on this important legislation, as well as the full committee Chair, Mr. MILLER, and the ranking member, Mr. MCKERON.

As a number of speakers have talked about their own experience and the gentleman from Connecticut, through his work in the Peace Corps, these opportunities to participate in the programs that are funded and authorized under the National Community and Service Act impact not just those who receive the benefit of the work done, but those who actually participate. And with a family member who has participated in AmeriCorps, I have seen that impact on that individual and how they were a stronger person and better prepared for the rest of their adult years because of having been part of AmeriCorps.

So, again, I urge a "yes" vote for this legislation and look forward to it moving forward through the House and working with the Senate to get it to the President's desk.

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong support of H.R. 2857, the Generations Invigorating Volunteerism and Education or "GIVE" Act.

This legislation reauthorizes and strengthens our national service programs. I would like to thank my good friend CAROLYN MCCARTHY, chairwoman of the Healthy Families and Communities Subcommittee and Congressman TODD PLATTS, the ranking member, for their excellent, bipartisan work on this legislation.

The spirit of service runs strong in America. Many Americans—young and old, rich and poor—look for ways to give back to their communities and the Nation. Our national service programs nurture this spirit and ensure that all American have opportunities to serve.

The GIVE Act will increase the number of AmeriCorps volunteers to 100,000. In my congressional district AmeriCorps volunteers are promoting community development, improving

education, and enhancing the quality of life for many of our residents. They bring a great deal of energy and contribute to a strong sense of community in our area.

The GIVE Act fosters an ethic of civic engagement in young people through a summer of service program that will enable students in middle and high school to volunteer and earn an education award for college.

The GIVE Act promotes service in areas of national need for global competitiveness, such as science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

The GIVE Act will ensure that we can effectively and efficiently mobilize volunteers in times of national disaster.

The GIVE Act strengthens opportunities for our seniors by providing flexibility to the senior corps programs. In my congressional district, we have very strong programs that engage our seniors in service and provide them companionship and support. Our seniors continue to make tremendous contributions to our communities. We cannot afford to let their talent or energy go to waste.

My home State of Texas is a big believer in national service. We have 48,000 senior corps members. Since 1994, 24,000 Texans have earned education awards by serving as AmeriCorps volunteers; 48,000 students have participated in Learn and Serve America, linking service with academic achievement.

The GIVE act will make this great tradition of service even stronger. I urge all of my colleagues to vote "yes."

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong support of the GIVE Act and I thank my colleague Mrs. MALONEY for her leadership on this issue. Volunteers in our National Service Corps are doing the hard work of building what I like to call the Beloved Community—a community at peace with itself based on justice and human dignity.

We all live in one house, the American house, and people are suffering. We need so many more Americans to volunteer, to share their talents, their time and their love. That is how we form the Beloved Community.

So many Americans are giving of themselves through AmeriCorps/VISTA, Summer of Service, and our Senior Volunteer Corps. Many more want to give and volunteer, but they can't find the time. They are stuck at work trying to make ends meet. They sit in traffic. They are helping their kids with homework. Businesses and governments need to encourage and allow people to volunteer.

Young people have been behind all of the great social movements in this Nation. We must tap into the idealism and the talents of our young people, and the young at heart, who can build bridges and ease suffering.

Something is happening in America. In Atlanta, we are embracing the merger between the Points of Light Foundation and the "Hands On" Network. I want to mention their good work and their leadership in recruiting and training volunteers.

I look forward to working with my colleagues to find more ways, like competitive grants for nonprofits, to expand our volunteer infrastructure, to push our national service agenda forward.

The GIVE Act is a good bill. It has my support. I thank my colleagues.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chairman, throughout our history, American citizens have never hesitated to heed the call to service. They

have answered in times of peace and prosperity, in times of war and recession. They have donated time and money and sweat—as much as they could, whenever it was needed.

When our Nation faced the Great Depression, President Roosevelt formed the Civilian Conservation Corps and put citizens to work for the national interest. When we faced political uncertainty in the world, President Kennedy challenged our young people to serve and dispatched the Peace Corps on missions of international aid and public diplomacy. And when neighbors have challenges, when communities struggle, or when the Nation sees tragedy, our citizens rally and lend a hand.

In recent years, we have seen some of the largest increases in volunteerism in history. This new trend is led by our young people, who are serving in record numbers. The number of college students who volunteer increased by 20 percent between 2002 and 2005. And the programs we consider today are a key part of that service.

Today's legislation will increase enrollment in AmeriCorps and establish ways to deploy AmeriCorps alumni in times of national need. It will establish an Office of Outreach and Recruitment to match new volunteers with service opportunities. It will create a new program, a Summer of Service, to encourage more young people to help their communities. It will strengthen our emergency preparedness and disaster response with improvements to the National Civilian Community Corps. And it will challenge our scientists, mathematicians, and engineers to meet our Nation's technical needs with creativity and innovation.

Mr. Chairman, Americans have made tremendous investments through national service. Let us, in turn, pass this legislation today to assist their efforts and continue their commitment to our Nation's future.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong support of the Generations Invigorating Volunteerism and Education Act. The GIVE Act will expand the Corporation for National and Community Service which has been instrumental in helping connect Americans to high quality, meaningful service and service-learning opportunities. The GIVE Act will increase the benefits of service available to more participants and more communities, improve program quality, ensure participant diversity, increase the value of the AmeriCorps education award, and reduce the age eligibility for Senior Corps to 55.

In the last 14 years more than 500,000 individuals have served through AmeriCorps and have earned education awards worth more than \$1.5 billion. Senior Corps members have generated more than 1 billion volunteer service hours, and more than 15 million young people have participated in service-learning initiatives funded by Learn and Serve America. In addition, the national service programs have provided opportunities for growing numbers of Americans to serve our Nation.

Since AmeriCorps was created in 1994, Texas has benefited from over 22,000 young people serving for at least 1 year in our communities. Through programs such as the "National Civilian Community Corps" and "City Year," AmeriCorps volunteers address critical Texas needs in the areas of education, public safety, disaster response and recovery, and environment preservation. These programs serve the important role of providing an outlet for service to the country in a manner previously not afforded.